

## **Editor's Note for Yuval Volume XIV**

**Rebecca Cypess**

When my friend and colleague Yoel Greenberg asked me to serve as guest editor of an issue of Yuval, I readily agreed. I hadn't yet finished guest editing an issue of *Min-Ad: Journal of the Israel Musicological Society*—an issue that appeared at the very beginning of 2025—when Yoel's invitation arrived, and I had no plan regarding the theme of the new issue of Yuval, but I figured something would occur to me. Then I read an article that had arrived in the interim, Michael Cherlin's "A Fine Reciprocity," and I was hooked: The article is all about connections—between people and artworks, between people and one another, between people and the divine. Through plays on words and sound, and by drawing on references as disparate as Abulafia and Arnold Schoenberg, Cherlin illuminates how music comes to serve as both an outpouring and a source of reflection and mutual care. Especially in moments of fracture—and I sense very much that we are in such a moment now—the best we can do is reach out to one another in a spirit of "fine reciprocity."

Having agreed to guest edit this issue, I turned to four scholars whose work I admire deeply—Samantha Cooper, Gordon Dale, Kathryn Huether, and Amy Wlodarski—and asked if they would contribute some of their new work. All four tentatively agreed but asked, "What's the theme of the issue?" I didn't have an answer, but I again trusted that, with their excellent contributions, I'd be able to retrofit a theme onto the special issue. In the end, all four submitted wonderful articles, and I wrote my own contribution on a topic that I had been thinking about for a couple of years. There was so much material that Yoel and I decided to split the special issue into two.

In addition to Cherlin's "A Fine Reciprocity," this first issue includes work by Gordon Dale and Kathryn Huether on two very different topics. Dale's "'Evolution of Jewish Music': Discourse Communities and Narrative Construction in the Performance of Music History" explores how two Jewish popular groups—the Modern Orthodox Y-Studs on one hand, and the more "yeshivish" Benny Friedman and Meir Kay on the other—construct their versions of Jewish musical history through selective surveys of musical styles in their music videos titled "Evolution of Jewish Music." Dale argues that these videos reflect the performers' connections with their respective communities; through musical language, history, and performance, the two groups articulate their communal boundaries and bonds.

Huether's essay, "'Pre-Mediation and the Crisis of Experiential Memorialization: Listening to the Nova Exhibition,'" is on a far more somber and difficult topic, but it, too, addresses human connection—in this case, the music and sound adopted by the Nova Exhibition to share the story of tragedy, trauma, and pain that struck at the Nova festival in Israel on October 7, 2023. Through engagement with the social media frenzy that occurred on October 7 itself and in viral fashion on the internet in subsequent days, weeks, months, and years, Huether shows how the "pre-mediation" of the media landscape primed visitors to the Nova Exhibition to experience a wide range of responses, from sympathy and grief to irony and resistance. Drawing on sound studies and memory studies, Huether's study guides us toward a new understanding of sound and memory in the "platform age."

The articles by Cooper, Wlodarski, and me will wait for the next issue of Yuval.

Cherlin posits a "fundamental kind of reciprocity, one might even say a metaphysical principle basic to the ways we interact with the world about us, including the people we come to know." At the end of this process of guest editing a special issue of Yuval (actually, now two issues), this is perhaps the only theme that has emerged to unify the articles: the theme of reciprocity, connection, friendship. I am gratified and honored to have worked with Yoel and with each of the remarkable scholars in this issue and the next, and I sense their humanity and friendship emerging from their work. I hope readers will enjoy and learn from that work and experience some of the goodwill and friendship that I have felt throughout this process.